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are to be placed in a box, shaken up and a name drawn for each of the sections in turn until all are drawn out. Regardless of location in the ward, the voters must vote in the section for which their names have been drawn. Each section, thus made up, must meet and choose one "representative elector," and the four "representative electors" shall select all the officers now elected by wards, and the representative electors of all the wards shall assemble and elect a Mayor and other general city officers. It seems to be a scheme to prevent the people from electing inferior men by their own action, and compelling them to participate in a game of chance to overreach themselves. It is hoped the New York Legislature will authorize the city of Oswego to try its truly original device.

A CUSTOM OVERDONE.

The custom of making New Year's calls has so far fallen into disuse that it can no longer be called a custom. As originally practiced, it was a pleasing observance of an annual holiday. There is a general feeling that the first day of a new year should be in some manner set apart from other days, and that there is a fitness in celebrating it by neighborly intercourse and a renewal of old friendships cannot be denied. Whether the custom in question resulted from the suggestion of some social genius or grew into popularity through a common and spontaneous recognition of its appropriateness, it was the outcome of a happy thought. In spite of their absorption in business and distaste for the formalities of society, men have sufficient social instinct to enjoy an occasional meeting with old acquaintances, though they may not care to make new ones. To call on these friends at their homes on New Year's day, to exchange greetings, to manifest an interest in their welfare, to indulge in a few reminiscences, perhaps, served to strengthen old ties and to brighten the opening cycle of months in a surprising way. All this remained true while the friends they called upon were "at home" in the simple and primitive sense; when they were at leisure for the chat and personal gossip possible only among friends, and subject only to interruption by the coming of other friends who added to the scene of reunion. But this agreeable state of affairs did not last. With the propensity of Americans to spoil a good thing by overdoing it, an attempt was made to improve upon this New Year's custom, with the inevitable result that what was once popular and pleasing speedily became unpopular and wearisome, and is now practically abandoned. Instead of remaining at their own fireside to welcome their friends in informal but hospitable manner, women began to flock together, to array themselves in gorgeous attire, to provide elaborate feasts, to make of what was a simple, homely and homelike reception a fashionable and oppressive function. The distinctive charm of the custom was at once lost. To society men, so-called, the new fashion had no special attraction, for they could attend similar gatherings at any time; men who found no pleasure in crowds or in meeting strangers could not be persuaded that the new regime was equal to the old, and so gave up the social observance of the day. The excuse is made in large cities that the distances make such observance difficult if not impossible, but the true reason of its abandonment there, as elsewhere, is undoubtedly the increased formality and the corresponding loss of personal interest in the occasion. It might be better if American men had more of the gregarious spirit and were as willing to mingle socially with a multitude as with two and threes, but since this is not the case, and a change to such condition of mind seems unlikely, the vanishing of a fashion that, at its best, was good and kept alive a social sentiment, is to be regretted.

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